WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented system of developing multi-tier business applications, comprising:

 an Integrated Development Environment (IDE), executed by a computer, for creating and maintaining a multi-tier business application on a multiple tier computer network, wherein the IDE includes a Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer that is used by a developer to graphically design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy the multi-tier business application, the Composer includes a window and a palette, and the palette contains graphical constructs representing tiers and components of the tiers that are used to design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy a graphical presentation of the multi-tier business application in the window.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the icons are dragged from the palette onto the window, and thereafter connected together, in a topological structure for the multi-tier business application.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the components are selected from a group comprising workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the Composer is used to perform one or more actions selected from a group comprising:

 creating the tiers involved in the multi-tier business application;

 specifying the components of each of the tiers; and

 specifying properties that identify each of the tiers and the components of the tiers.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the IDE further comprises a Meta-model that captures information entered via the Composer and that persistently stores the information.

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6.   The system of claim 5, wherein the captured information is selected from a group comprising information about tiers, workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

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7.   The system of claim 5, wherein the Meta-model is updated and kept in synchronization with any updates made to the multi-tier business application via the Composer.

10   8.   The system of claim 5, wherein the Meta-model is accessible by other tools.

9.   A computer-implemented method for developing multi-tier business applications, comprising:

creating and maintaining a multi-tier business application on a multiple tier computer

15   network using an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) executed by a computer, wherein the IDE includes a Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer that is used by a developer to graphically design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy the multi-tier business application, the Composer includes a window and a palette, and the palette contains graphical constructs representing tiers and components of the tiers that are

20   used to design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy a graphical presentation of the multi-tier business application in the window.

10.   The method of claim 9, wherein the icons are dragged from the palette onto the window, and thereafter connected together, in a topological structure for the multi-tier

25   business application.

11.   The method of claim 9, wherein the components are selected from a group comprising workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

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12.   The method of claim 9, wherein the Composer is used to perform one or more actions selected from a group comprising:

creating the tiers involved in the multi-tier business application;

specifying the components of each of the tiers; and

specifying properties that identify each of the tiers and the components of the tiers.

13.   The method of claim 9, wherein the IDE further comprises a Meta-model that captures information entered via the Composer and that persistently stores the information.

14.   The method of claim 13, wherein the captured information is selected from a group comprising information about tiers, workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

15.   The method of claim 13, wherein the Meta-model is updated and kept in synchronization with any updates made to the multi-tier business application via the Composer.

16.   The method of claim 13, wherein the Meta-model is accessible by other tools.

17.   An article of manufacture embodying logic for developing multi-tier business applications, the logic comprising:

creating and maintaining a multi-tier business application on a multiple tier computer network using an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) executed by a computer, wherein the IDE includes a Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer that is used by a developer to graphically design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy the multi-tier business application, the Composer includes a window and a palette, and the

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palette contains graphical constructs representing tiers and components of the tiers that are used to design, develop, maintain, build, test, debug, and deploy a graphical presentation of the multi-tier business application in the window.

18.   The article of manufacture of claim 17, wherein the icons are dragged from the palette onto the window, and thereafter connected together, in a topological structure for the multi-tier business application.

19.   The article of manufacture of claim 17, wherein the components are selected from a group comprising workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

20.   The article of manufacture of claim 17, wherein the Composer is used to perform one or more actions selected from a group comprising:
       creating the tiers involved in the multi-tier business application;
       specifying the components of each of the tiers; and
       specifying properties that identify each of the tiers and the components of the tiers.

21.   The article of manufacture of claim 17, wherein the IDE further comprises a Meta-model that captures information entered via the Composer and that persistently stores the information.

22.   The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the captured information is selected from a group comprising information about tiers, workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

23.   The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the Meta-model is updated and kept in synchronization with any updates made to the multi-tier business application via the Composer.

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24.   The article of manufacture of claim 21, wherein the Meta-model is accessible by other tools.

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